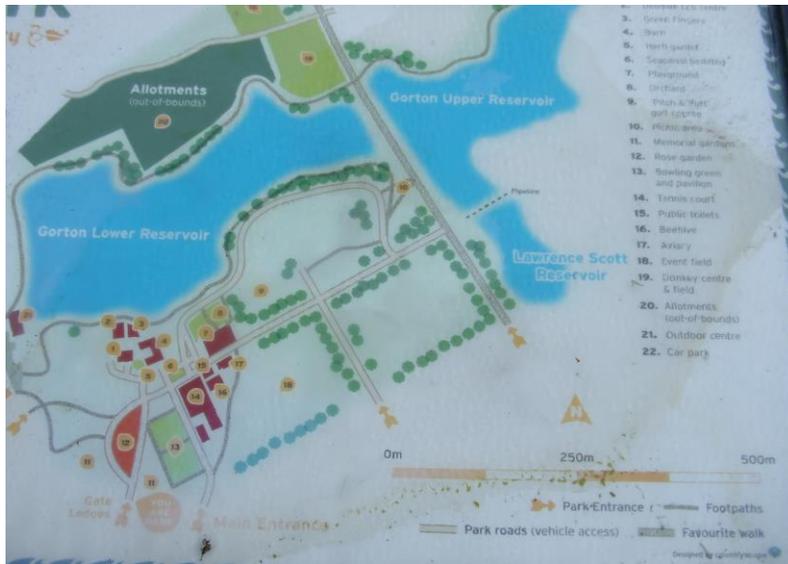


Park Facilities



Special Events.

Gorton Parade and annual Carnival at the beginning of September
Bonfire and Fireworks display at the end of October.

Regular Events.

Sunday mini-marathons
Mondays 10.30-12.00 Cycling for Health from the old barn
Mondays 12.00-3.00 Gorton Visual Arts in the Aviary
Tuesday's 10.30- 12.00 Health Walks from the barn

More Information

www.friendsofdebdalepark@co.uk

Address

Debdale Park
1075 Hyde Road
Gorton
Manchester M18 7LJ

Park Phone: 0161 223 8278

The Story of Debdale Park



The new Heritage Garden – opened 2015

The story of Debdale Park begins in 1851 when Manchester City Council purchased the land surrounding Gorton reservoirs from the Waterworks Company. The purpose of this was to protect the area around this valuable water supply for the city. Gradually this land became available for public use as a recreation ground though no attempt was made to make it into a proper park.

At first the council were reluctant to spend money on facilities but during the First World War this began to change. In 1914 a Bowling Club was created and in 1915 an area fenced off as pitches for cricket, football and hockey.

In the Depression of the 1920's the council devised a programme of relief work in the parks and Debdale acquired an outdoor swimming pool, which later became a paddling pool, and an Aviary, which later became a sports pavilion and changing room.

After the Second World War the land surrounding Gorton House was incorporated into the park and Gorton House made into two flats for the Park Keeper and his deputy. Later they became administrative offices for the park. These were closed in 2004 when the building became unsafe and since which it has fallen into decay.

The Barn complex next to the house has continued to be used for a variety of projects and partly restored. It now houses the Cycle Centre, Hammer & Nails Woodwork project, a café and toilets. The Aviary building was restored in the 1990's as Community Rooms by a number of volunteer projects run by Care & Repair. It now provides a home to a number of projects such as Gorton Visual Arts and Pinnacle People welfare to work programme. All these projects are part of The Friends of Debdale which now helps to look after the buildings and park

In the Park

Debdale Park provides a large open space of 59 hectares (130 Acres) and has been described as a 'green oasis' where people can come and escape from the busy built up areas of East Manchester.

Located alongside two reservoirs and two golf courses it has an extended recreational reach with many pleasant walks. It is also home to a great diversity of wild life with wooded areas managed to provide a habitat for birds and insects. An extensive planting programme for trees and wild flower meadows is currently under way.

The reservoirs now provide extensive recreational facilities with a range of water sports offered by Debdale Outdoor Centre on the Lower Reservoir and fishing and the Upper Reservoir with Debdale Angling Society which has recently built a number of fishing pegs which also have disabled access.

Recreational facilities in the park include a multi sport and BMX area, tennis court, bowling greens, children's play area and a nursery. All these facilities are in the process of restoration and expansion so as to provide a better park with something for everyone.

A wide range of projects are now run in the park by the Friends of Debdale Park. These include an Eco-Centre, Cycling for Health, Wheels for All, Health Walks, Gorton Visual Arts, Woodwork centre and Foundation Years Nursery.

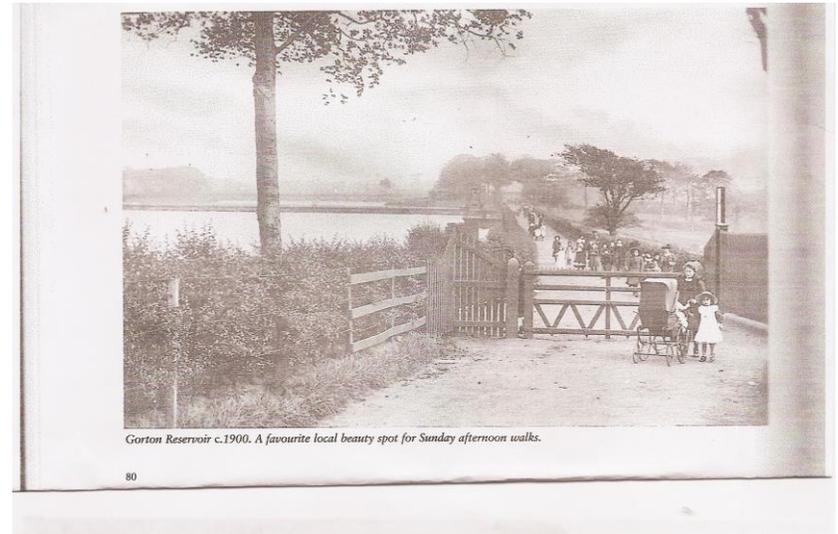
The Friends promote the improvement of the park in many practical ways, providing machinery, planting and maintaining flower beds, restoring the buildings such as the park lodges, which are now a Visitor Centre, and raising funds. In 2014 they raised nearly £40,000 for the park.

In 2014 The Friends of Debdale Park won the Queen's Award for Voluntary service



Gorton Carnival - held every year in the park attracts thousands of visitors

The Reservoirs



Gorton Reservoir c.1900. A favourite local beauty spot for Sunday afternoon walks.

The presence of the reservoirs alongside the park give its distinctive character and have always made it an attractive place to visit – hence the name 'Favourite Walk' along the causeway between the two levels.

In 1821 the Manchester and Salford Water Company were authorised by an Act of Parliament to purchase the land just to the rear of Gorton House and construct two large reservoirs. They were high enough to supply the Manchester area with water by gravitation. These were the first municipal reservoirs to be built in the country to supply fresh water to the rapidly expanding cotton town.

The reservoirs were completed between 1825 and 1826 when they began supplying nearly one million gallons of water per day. They stopped being used as a water supply in 1963 but have been used since for recreational purposes such as water sports and fishing.

The Reservoir Keeper lived in a house just alongside Favourite Walk. It was his job to supervise the maintenance of the reservoirs and keep records of the water levels. Maintenance included cleaning the waters, cutting hedges and maintaining the land around the reservoirs.

The house was demolished in 1939 and the last Reservoir Keeper retired in 1955. The area in which his house stood is now the picnic area.